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ABSTRACT

Defining "idols of communication" as widely-held ideas that obstruct progress in the development of interpersonal communication theory, this paper identifies three principles deserving of the title. The identified principles are: (1) the idol of coorientation, the belief that mutual understandings are the essential grounds for the coordination of human action; (2) the idol of observers' coding, the belief that observers' coding of conversation can replace actors' idiosyncratic meanings; and (3) the idol of pattern, the belief that knowledge of the observable pattern of talk obviates the need to know the underlying logic of actors' talk. The paper then discusses the ways in which the three principles are obstructive. It next presents a case study of two episodes in a close personal relationship, based on a theory termed "Coordinated Management of Meaning," which employs both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis and rejects all three of the principles. (FL)

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COORIENTATION, OBSERVER CODING, AND THE ANALYSIS OF OVERT PATTERNS OF TALK: A CASE STUDY AND A CHALLENGE TO THREE "IDOLS" OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the case study of two episodes in a close personal relationship. The case study is offered as a challenge to three "idols" of communication. The term "idols" refers to widely held principles which, if over-emphasized, obstruct rather than facilitate the development of interpersonal communication theory. The idols challenged in this paper are: 1) the idol of coorientation; 2) the idol of observers' coding, and 3) the idol of pattern. The case study itself is based on the theory of The Coordinated Management of Meaning and employs both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis.

COORIENTATION, OBSERVER CODING, AND THE ANALYSIS OF OVERT PATTERNS OF TALK: A CASE STUDY AND A CHALLENGE TO THREE "IDOLS" OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Francis Bacon warned his readers to avoid various "idols of the mind." Bacon used the term idols for ideas that scientists treat with reverence but which obstruct rather than aid inquiry. In this paper we wish to propose three principles for the unenviable status: "idols of communication." They are widely held ideas which we believe obstruct progress in the development of interpersonal communication theory. These ideas are:

The idol of coorientation: that mutual understandings are the essential grounds for the coordination of human action.

The idol of observers' coding: that observers' coding of conversation can replace actors' idiosyncratic meanings.

The idol of pattern: that knowledge of the observable pattern of talk obviates the need to know the underlying logic of actors' talk.

In subsequent sections of this paper, we will present our reasons for regarding the foregoing principles as obstructive idols. We will then present a case study based on a theory called the Coordinated Management of Meaning (Pearce, 1976; Cronen and Pearce, 1978; Cronen, Pearce, and Harris, 1979). Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory (hereafter CMM) is one that explicitly rejects all three of the idols.

ARE THEY IDOLS?: SOME SUGGESTIVE EVIDENCE

The idol of coorientation. It has become a sort of truism in our field that our focus should be on the achievement of coorientation or mutuality of understanding. Millar, Rogers-Millar, and Courtright (1979) say that "a basic assumption of the interpersonal competence literature is that mutual understanding is facilitative of negotiations and/or coordination of plans"

(p. 214). This principle cuts across several divergent theories. The constructivists say that higher levels of cognitive complexity allow individuals to construe the construct systems of others (Hale and Delia, 1976; Kelly, 1955). Thus cognitive complexity becomes the basis for improved role-taking which in turn facilitates the coordination of action (Clark and Delia, 1977). Berger's Uncertainty Reduction Theory contends that persons coordinate talk by coorienting to the same culturally defined pattern such as the initial interaction sequence (Berger, et al., 1976). Thus while Constructivist and Uncertainty Reduction Theories differ substantially in their accounts of how coorientation is achieved, both of these theories focus attention on the achievement of coorientation as the essential grounding upon which coordinated actions are organized. Of course the humanistic tradition expounded in many texts strongly emphasizes empathic communication--so that conversants can get in close touch with self and other (Stewart, 1972; Johnson, 1972). While a complete survey is well beyond the scope of this paper it is fair to conclude that many scholars assume that coorientation is a crucial precondition for coordination.

CMM theory takes the heretical view that our primary focus should be on coordination per se and that coorientation is but one of several means to the achievement of coordination (Pearce and Cronen, 1979). In fact it can be argued that culturally significant forms of coordination are sometimes achieved precisely because participants are not cooriented. Cultural anthropologists have observed that Eskimo shamen are very much aware that most celebrants have a literal interpretation of the rituals and myths that is not shared by the shamen. The shamen say that the value of the celebrations lie in their social bonding effects. The coordinated performance of shamen and celebrants seems to be predicted on their lack of agreement concerning the nature of

rituals and myths (Campbell, 1959). Cushman (1976) has also argued against over-emphasis on coorientation. Cushman contends that the modern predicament of culturally diverse but interdependent groups requires a rhetoric of negotiation that does not require an appreciation or deep understanding of divergent values (Cushman, 1979). It is important to observe that Campbell, Pearce, and Cushman are not saying that coordination may be accidentally achieved by means other than coorientation. Rather they posit that coorientation may be produced by a number of processes each with a logic of their own.

The idol of observers' coding

The recognition that human discourse is patterned (Clarke, 1975; Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967) has brought in its wake a variety of coding schemes for describing patterns. Among them are the relational coding system of Rogers and Farace (1975), the conversational sequencing system of Stech (1979) and the family conflict code of Rauch et al. (1974). Each has shown admirable reliability and a non-change relationship to other important communication variables. Sponsors of theories like CMM that stress the importance of actors' idiosyncratic meanings can, however, advance a number of limitations on the explanatory power of observers' coding. Etic procedures--the imposition of a ready made schema upon the content of messages in a particular conversation--not only loses some information, it may lose the most crucial information. Harris (in press) reported in a recent study the case of a couple who consistently redefined their "Let's have it out," all night shouting matches as proof of their mutual devotion. Both partners assert that their willingness to "confront" in emotionally painful ways was post hoc proof of their mutual commitment--the bigger the blow-up, the stronger the proof! In the constructivist tradition Landfield (1971) has shown that idiosyncratic differences between clients' and therapists' construct systems are

powerfully predictive of the course of therapeutic relationships. The role-taking studies of Hale and Delia (1976) also suggest the importance of grappling with actors' own meanings. The positive correlation of cognitive complexity with role-taking ability indicates that superior role taking ability requires a cognitive system complex enough to grasp the unique idiosyncracies of another's perspective; not just those dimensions of meaning that are the cultural common stock.

It is not our conclusion that etic systems applied by coders are of no value. Only that a reliance on these procedures as a substitute for actors own meanings will often be misleading. An excellent example of the combined use of idiosyncratic meanings and a coding system may be found in the use of Minuchin et al (1967) who used coding to reveal patterns of interaction in disorganized slum families, which were outside the awareness of participants. Minuchin and his colleagues used actors' own meanings derived from extensive interviews to explain the dynamics underlying these patterns.

The idol of pattern

The work of Fisher and Ellis (1975) represents a conviction that the observable features of conversation, if properly analyzed, will yield a sufficient explanation of conversation itself. This was certainly the convication of several participants at the recent SCA seminar on argumentation as a way of knowing (Thomas, in press). Again there is evidence which leads us to doubt this principle. Cronen, Pearce, and Snavely (1979) have shown that actors' evaluation of the desirability of episodes is a function of whether they feel stuck--enmeshed--in a logic over which they lack control. What seems important from this study is not that some message A precedes B which precedes C. Rather, the crucial consideration is whetner actors feel they have control over producing this pattern. The impact of any pattern of a conversation on

a relationship seems to also depend on how actors perceive the connection between particular actions and abstract conceptions of self and their relationship (Harris and Cronen, 1979).

COORDINATED MANAGEMENT OF MEANING

CMM Theory places its emphasis on efforts to attain coordination. Coordinated episodes are those which have the following characteristics: 1) each actor perceives the episode created as coherent--although they may be poles apart in their interpretation; 2) actors perceive the pattern of talk to be within their joint control; 3) actors see the results of the episode as positive in valence. According to this theory, efforts to create coordinated episodes are guided by rules. Each actor organizes cognitions into constitutive and regulative rules that constitute his or her own intrapersonal logic. The joining of two actors' rules forms an interpersonal logic of conversation. The content of rules is presumed to be actors own meanings developed and organized in the course of social interaction.

CMM is unique among rules theories because it locates rules in the heads of actors rather than inferring them from observed regularities in talk (see Harris, 1979b and Jackson, 1965). CMM is also unique because it offers a structural analysis of rules. A full description of CMM is outside the scope of this paper and available elsewhere but a brief description of CMM rule structure is required to illuminate the means employed in the case study that follows.

Regulative rule structure

The form of a regulative rule is shown in Figure 1. The principles behind this form are that actors organize meaning both temporally (in terms

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Figure 1 here

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of antecedent and consequent events) and hierarchically. The model in Figure 1 shows four levels of hierarchical contexting above what Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967) call the content level of meaning. The higher levels of context depicted are:

Speech acts are those things which one person does to another by saying something, such as "you are beautiful" counts as the speech "compliment." There are many communicative events which are better understood as "performatives" rather than "declaratives," whose meanings are acts rather than referents. One of Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson's (1967) "axioms" is that all messages invoke meaning on both "content" and "relationship" levels, with "relational" meanings comprising speech acts.

Episodes are "communicative routines which communicators view as distinct wholes, separate from other types of discourse, characterized by special rules of speech and nonverbal behavior and often distinguished by clearly recognizable opening or closing sequences." They appear as patterned sequences of speech acts and establish the fields in which the rules governing speech acts exist.

Master contracts are implicit agreements between individuals concerning the collective "we" (i.e., who "we are as a couple"). They are an individual's cognitive representation of the relationship. A master contract is made up of patterns of episodes comprising the person's expectations for the kinds of communicative events which should occur between self and other (Harris and Cronen, 1978).

Life scripts consist of an individual's repertoire of episodes which makes up one's concept of self. They comprise the person's expectations for the kinds of communicative events which can and "should" occur to her/him.

Regulative rule structure as variables

The connection between elements in a regulative rule may vary in strength (Cronen and Pearce, 1978; Cronen, Pearce and Snavely, 1979). The nature of linkages between elements produces different degrees of "logical force" (see Cushman and Pearce, 1977; Cronen and Davis, 1978). The following list summarizes some of the structural variables (prefigurative and practical forces) which are believed important in the generation of "logical force" and the explanation of particular forms of social interaction.

Prefigurative forces

1) Act-antecedent linkage. The antecedent condition may be perceived by the actor as "requiring" specific acts with varying degrees of force. For example,

a friend's hallway greeting may simultaneously: obligate a reciprocal greeting; legitimate but not require sports or weather talk; and prohibit an intense self-disclosure.

2) Act-episode linkage. The performance of a particular episode may require some acts with greater force than other acts. In the performance of rituals such as Mass or a marriage service, the episode exerts an obligatory force on every act.

3) Act-master contract linkage. An individual's conception of "who we are" may seem to necessitate some acts with greater force than others.

4) Act-life script linkage. An individual's conception of "self-in-action," "who I am," may seem to necessitate some acts with greater force than others. Sometimes strong act-life script linkages "cause" persons to act in ways apparently incongruous with the demands of the episode or their desired consequent conditions.

Practical forces

1) Act-consequent linkage An actor may perform a specific act because he/she feels it to be more necessary to bring about consequent act(s). Actions that are weakly predicated on consequences are referred to as "functionally autonomous."

2) Desired consequent-lifescript linkage. The elicitation of desirable consequences may be required in order to confirm one's concept of self.

3) Consequent valence. The actor's perception of the desirability of the act which follows his/her own.

The scales that operationalize variables were pretested and are presented with their reliabilities in Figure 2.

Figure 2 here

Constitutive rules. Constitutive rules specify how meanings at one level of abstraction "count as" meaningful at another level. For example, the statement "you are beautiful" counts as the speech act "compliment"--at least sometimes. Given the contextualization "dating," this constitutive rule may describe how persons process information. However, given the context of "argument," quite a different "speech act" or "relational" meaning may be invoked. The primitive form of a constitutive rule may be algebraicized as

shown in Figure 1. This primitive form specifies that in a certain context, if specific antecedent conditions are satisfied, then meaning at one level of abstraction "counts as" a certain meaning at another level of abstraction.

CMM and the use of case studies

CMM theory emphasizes coordination over coorientation, stresses the value of actors' idiosyncratic meanings, and offers tools for analyzing the structure of logics behind patterns of talk. The value of these emphases may be explored by examination of actual close personal relationships. We do not doubt that one can find in general a relationship between coorientation and coordination (Bochner and Kelly, 1974) and between certain etically coded patterns and communication satisfaction (Rogers and Farace, 1975). But we do question whether a theory based on statistical trends alone can be of much value when that theory is put to use in the analysis of a particular human relationship. We doubt that the statistical relationships reflect laws of behavior which can be usefully applied to each specific case. Instead, we believe that associations such as that between coorientation and coordination show general tendencies--products of negotiations of meaning for our culture at a particular time. If we cannot assume that nomothetic studies reveal laws of communication, then what is required is a research plan that tacks back and forth between nomothetic studies and idiographic case studies. Case studies provide insight into how to interpret results of nomothetic research.

DAVE AND JAN: A CASE STUDY

Research methods

Qualitative data collection. Two interview strategies were implemented for the purpose of selecting subjects and eliciting self reports from them. Unstructured telephone interviews were used to screen couples. The screening interviews served to assess prospective couples' willirgness and ability to

talk freely and clearly about their relationships to the interviewer. Two couples, Dave and Jan and Rob and Ann, were selected based on this criterion. Unstructured interviews were also used to elicit subjects' reports of their own individual development (life scripts) and of the history of their relationship (master contracts). These interviews were conducted and taped with each subject individually.

The second interview strategy involved a series of structural interviews. During the first structured interview sessions each couple generated "typical" dialogues of recurrent and significant episodes. These dialogues were used throughout the interview sessions as reminders of what was said during each episode. Later sessions involved elicitation of each subject's interpretation of the dialogues into speech acts. This was the first step in the generation of subjects' logics.

A suggested list of "speech act" labels was provided to use in referring to the content of the conversation. The subjects were asked to indicate each of their own and each of their partner's messages and to indicate the kind of message they desired to receive from the other. The list of speech act labels suggested to the subject included: initiating, terminating, giving information, requesting emotional support...etc. The two subjects were encouraged to go beyond the list and label the relational meanings of the messages as they saw fit. The suggested list functioned primarily to show subjects what was meant by relational meanings.

Quantitative data collection. Subjects' joint reports of key episodes--in the form of dialogues--and their individual interpretations--in the form of speech acts--served as the focal point for assessing the nature and strength of the forces in their logics. This assessment was conducted through the use of scales which measure the strengths of linkages among components in the regulative rule model. These scales are refinements and extensions of those

used in earlier nomothetic studies (Cronen, Pearce and Snavely, 1979; and Pearce, Lannamann, and McNamee, 1979).

Each individual was presented with a booklet containing the dialogue and speech acts, several sets of scales as shown in Figure 2, plus a number of filler scales and scales for use in other research projects. Scales 1-8 were successively applied to each of the subjects own speech acts. Scales 9 through 11 refer to overall impressions of the episode as a whole and were administered after the first set. The scales which measured overall impressions of the episode measured the desirability of the outcome of the episode, the ability of actors to present the self and altercast other in his/her appropriate role. Booklets were filled out by the subjects with neither their partner nor the researcher present.

Obviously, the use of single scale items to tap what were assumed to be discriminately different responses, while certainly precedented in the literature, is a departure from the best psychometric technique. The decision to use the single scale items was based upon prior studies which employed multiple scale indicators. Over the course of longer interviews, subjects' objections to the redundancy were so vociferous that it was decided that single scale items presented less threat to reliability and validity than multiple scales.

Descriptions of a relationship

Our focus will be on the intrapersonal and interpersonal logics of Jan and Dave, a couple in their early twenty's who have lived together for three years. First, we will present their description of themselves as individuals and as a couple. Secondly, we will overlay our structural description of their interpretations of themselves. And finally, we will report our analysis of Dave and Jan's relationship.

Self description. From the unstructured interviews, we elicited the following information about Dave and Jan's life script and master contract.

Dave, an undergraduate from an upper-middle class New England family, described himself as "flexible," "intelligent," and "not dominant." He rejects any controlling or dominating role. He also mentioned that "short term" results are very important to him as opposed to long term results. When talking about their relationship, Dave described Jan and himself as "...a couple of wishy-washy people" who have no distinct division of responsibilities. "I guess in some relationships the men perform some decision-making tasks and the women perform others. We don't have any clear-cut distinctions of power."

Jan, who grew up in a lower-middle class urban environment, described herself as a "lazy person." She said, "I don't like being lazy but because I'm lazy the only thing I can do is acknowledge it." She also defined herself as "not very assertive," "contrary," and "self-critical." She feels that the most difficult thing for her to do is to force herself into goal-oriented action. She described their relationship as one in which "he sets the rules a lot of the time. It takes a lot of work from me, but he pushes me around a lot to make me do something...in order to get me to stop taking everything on myself. So, he really does it for a positive reason...he encourages me to do lots of things to become more independent and in touch with my own power."

They both characterize the relationship as one in which neither Jan or Dave hold the decision-making role. When interviewed, they admitted this as the cause of unfinished and unmade decisions. At the same time, they distinguish between episodes where this lack of decisiveness is either irrelevant or harmful to their relationship. As Dave pointed out, "Sometimes it (Jan's inability to act) just doesn't seem to bother me a whole lot." However, Jan

is "lazy" and needs a "push" and Dave hates to be dominant or in control.

Selection of episodes for study

Two episodes were selected which to us as outside observers seemed to reflect their underlying dilemma: How can Dave "push" Jan without being dominant? Both episodes were called "typical" and "recurrent" by both Jan and Dave.

One episode we call the "job episode." It concerns Dave's efforts to get Jan to seek a job. The other we call the "letter writing" episode in which Dave attempts to get Jan to work on their correspondence. The "job" episode is shown in Figure 3 and the "letter writing" episode is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 3 -4 here

Getting things done: Coordination without coorientation

In the job episode, Dave and Jan deal with the central problem of getting Jan to take assertive action. The episode involves Jan's efforts to find a job. The couple believes that economic realities require her additional income so that they can continue to live together. They must pay rent, buy food, etc. Of course, Jan would need to have income even if she and Dave split up, but the couple sees the ecomonic situation as a relationship problem. The importance of the episode we have chosen goes beyond the particular problem of Jan's employment. Both see this episode as reflecting the fundamental problem in their relationship: Dave's search for a nondominant role, and Jan's life script which requires a dominant other to impel her to assertive action. Dave expressed the importance of the job-seeking episode when he told the interviewer, "What we're really fighting is the dependency thing" which is "a much bigger issue than finding a job."

This episode depicts a convoluted interpersonal logic. In essence, Jan's intrapersonal logic takes the simple form of an invitation to Dave: "Make me assertive." This invitation is similar in structure to the "be spontaneous" paradox Watzlawick (1976) has discussed. From Dave's perspective this invitation "forces" him to perform undesirable acts in order to achieve a desired goal. For example, the "ultimatum" is interpreted as a dominant act but a necessary one for "making her less dependent." Dave's logic then takes the simple form of a response to her invitation: "In order to make you my equal, I must be dominant."

This episode culminates in Act #17 (see Figure 3) where Dave gives explicit instructions for what Jan should do. Jan says that this is for her an "ultimatum"--which in turn spurs her to action. This is just what Jan wants. Jan told the interviewer that she will reinitiate the episode later if she does not get what, in her constitutive rules, counts as an ultimatum. For Dave, however, Act #17 counts as a backing down. "I'm telling her everything will be O.K., what's past doesn't matter, she can just start out fresh tomorrow." Thus, Dave believes that he is acting to move out of the dominating position by this act; no longer holding Jan's inactivity over her head. Her Act #18 wherein she agrees to go out tomorrow confirms Dave's impression that he has equalized the relationship. The result of this particular enactment, we subsequently learned, was that Jan did in fact interview for a job the next day and was hired! The lack of agreement on the meaning of #17 is precisely how this couple succeeds in spite of a convoluted logic.

The letter writing episode contrasts with the job episodes in coorientation only because, <u>throughout</u> the task of letter writing, the conversants understand each other very well--yet the letter does not get written. The job episode also exhibited rather complete understanding when compared to the

speech act descriptions of Jan and Dave. The failure to understand the other's meaning was at Acts #17 and 18 but that was crucial.

Are the episodes Similar?: Views from outside and inside

A coding form was developed for these and other episodes that focuses judges' attention on pressure and types of resistance to pressure in close personal relationships. Each of Jan and Dave's episodes was given to a panel of six naive coders. Coders categorized each interact. Intercoder reliability was .83. Of the nine interacts coded for the "job" episode five were coded by our judges as "pressing for action--resisting pressure" and three were coded as "pressing for action-giving into pressure." For the "letter writing" episode three of the six interacts were coded as "pressing for action-resisting pressure" and three as "pressing for action-giving into pressure." Clearly our naive coders thought, as we did, that the patterns looked similar.

It is interesting to report that while our six judges coded Act #17 with 100% agreement, Dave and Jan interpret its meaning quite differently and it is the difference that allows them to live within their confounded logic. Our judges coded Act #18 as "giving in to pressure" and did of with 100% agreement. But this misses the vital nuance of meaning that both Jan and Dave assign to it. To the participants, Act #18 indicates Jan's acceptance of a more equal, more dominant role in their relationship through a commitment to action.

While judges coded the dialogues as very similar an empirical investigation of Jan's and Dave's intrapersonal logics in the two episodes gives a very different picture. A mean was computed for both actors scores on each of the scales shown in Figure 2. The results for Jan and Dave's "letter writing" and "job" episodes were combined with data on some of their other episodes and data

on the episode obtained from another couple, Rob and Ann. Results were then normalized consistent with proper grid technique (Bannister and Fransella, 1978). Using our larger pool of data on four of Dave and Jan's episodes and one episode of Rob and Ann, we performed a non-parametric cluster analysis of individuals' rule structures. A grid was constructed with each individual performance in a particular episode forming the rows and variables of rule structure and performance forming columns.

The grid contains normalized values for each rule structure variable computed across acts in an episode. Spearman rank-order correlations were then computed between all pairs of episodes across the variables. The resulting correlation matrix was then "factored" by means of McQuitty's (1961) procedure.

Table 1 here

The episodes break down into two highly discrete clusters (see Table 1). Cluster number one which contains Dave's rules for the job hunting episode is typified by higher functional autonomy scores, lower scores for ability to present the self and cast the other, and stronger connections between speech acts and life scripts and desired consequence. Notice also that Dave and Jan's intrapersonal logics for the "letter writing" episode fall into the same factor, whereas they split for the "job" episode. Clearly we have similar observable patterns produced by different interpersonal logics. The importance of analyzing the underlying logic will be highlighted in the following section.

Regulative rule structure variables in the two episodes

The mean scores for Jan and Dave's rule structure variables are shown in Table 2. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare Jan and Dave's scores

Table 2 here

on the rule structure variables for each episode.

Turning first to the "job" episode, three significant differences emerged. Across the episode Dave's scores for act-consequent linkage are significantly lower than Jan's ($U = 12.5$, $p < .05$). Jan's life-script-act linkages are significantly higher than Dave's ($U = 10.5$, $p < .025$), while her life-script-desired consequents linkages are significantly lower than Dave's ($U = 12$, $p < .05$).

These results support the conclusion that Jan is incorrect in her perception that Dave purposively gives her a "kick" into action when he knows she needs it. It is Jan who is operating more purposively adjusting her acts to a conception of the response she wants from Dave. Jan's speech acts, together with Dave's conception of the episode sets up a pattern of prefigurative forces that channelize his action. Indeed, Dave's most functionally autonomous acts are those which lead up to and include the "ultimatum" or "kick" Jan wants him to give her. Consistent with our qualitative data Dave's life-script-act linkages are significantly lower than Jan's. He wishes to avoid the dominant role while Jan's life script requires her to use Dave to correct her laziness. The quantitative findings are also consistent with Jan's claim that she is innately lazy and that nothing can change this. The desired consequent-life script linkages for Jan are much weaker than Dave's. Jan's life script entails certain actions, but the consequences she desires from those actions do not alter her life-script.

Turning now to the "letter writing" episode, three significant differences again emerged. Jan's episode-act linkages are significantly lower than Dave's ($U = 2$, $p < .05$) indicating that she feels her acts to be less strongly prefigured by the episodic context than does Dave. This is in marked contrast

to Jan's episode-act linkage scores in the job episode (see Table 2). In the "letter writing" episode, Jan's master contract-act linkage and her life script-act linkage are significantly weaker than Dave's ($U = 4.5$, $p < .05$ and $U = 4$, $p < .05$ respectively). Thus in the letter writing episode, Dave and Jan do not significantly differ in the practical forces of their rules, but do differ in the strength of certain prefigurative forces. Yet, in the job episode they differ in the strength of practical forces. The nature of the data do not permit a significance test that compare an actor's rule structures across the two episodes. However, examination of means (see Table 2) indicates a stronger act-master contract linkage for Dave and Jan in the "job" episode as compared to the "letter writing" episode. The consequences of action seem to have much weaker implications for Jan's life script in the job episode for reasons already discussed. Jan also seems to perceive her actions as more strongly prefigured by her life script in the job script than in the letter writing episode. These differences are consistent with the contention of both Dave and Jan that the letter writing episode is trivial in comparison to the job episode; that the episodes are very different in spite of the fact that they look similar in external characteristics.

CONCLUSIONS

In the job episode, Jan acts purposively by acting lazy forcing Dave into a dominant position while Dave acts "passively" by refusing to act dominant. The resulting episode is a jointly coordinated one in which each act logically follows the preceeding one. These acts and adjoining, compatible but different, interpretations fit in a coordinated episode of cross purposes. It is jointly controlled in that its enactment requires the cooperative effort of each

participant to "misinterpret appropriately."

Because the episode is coordinated does not, however, mean that it is in all respects desirable. There is no resolution of Dave's confounded logic which we have stated as "I must make you assertive." Dave's actions must, of course, perpetuate Jan's system. He must take the dominant position because his sense of self and master contract require him to initiate these role dominant episodes and Jan deliberately creates conditions that entail Dave's initiation of these episodes. Dave want's a non-dominant, symmetrical relationship with Jan, but the logic created by the conjoining of their rules perpetuates the current situation.

The more trivial letter writing episode is one in which Dave pushes the episode forward guided by stronger prefigurative forces than Jan's. However, Dave is no less purposive in the selection of his actions than Jan--a departure from the situation in the job episode. Crucially, neither person construes a close connection between the pattern of action in the letter writing episode and their concept of the close personal relationship.

The qualitative and quantitative date reveal a situation wherein a lack of mutual understanding is precisely what makes coordination possible in a paradoxical situation. It is also clear that similarity which coders observe between episodes are profitably complimented by an investigation of actors' meanings. Finally, our investigation of the logic behind the observable pattern clearly revealed that the power relationships between Jan and Dave are much more complex and qualitatively different than either of them realize. They do not see that Jan has the power to initiate episodes in which Dave feels forced to dominate her. Jan purposively draws Dave into a logic that serves her needs though she does not realize how her sought after "ultimatum" has meaning for Dave.

In 1620, Bacon bid his contemporaries to reject all "idols of the mind" and to replace them with a pure empiricism shorn of any presuppositions. Today we know that this is not possible (Hansen, 1958 and Harre, 1972). Instead, we need to subject our "idols" to periodic re-evaluation. The case study reported here indicates that coorientation, transcript coding, and analysis of overt patterns may be over-emphasized. These current foci need to be balanced by an emphasis on the variety of means to coordination, actors' own meanings, and the logic behind conversation.

Primitive Form of a Constitutive Rule

$$cR = \overline{MC_k \Big| A \supset [MC_i \longrightarrow MC_j]}$$

Where:

A	=	Antecedent Condition
MC	=	Meaningful Construction
i, j, k	=	Levels of Abstraction
$\longrightarrow$	=	Read "counts as"
$\overline{}$	=	Read "in the context of"
$\supset$	=	Read "if...then"

Primitive Form of a Regulative Rule

$$rR = \overline{LS \Big| \overline{MC \Big| \overline{Ep \Big| [A \supset (DO(SpAct))_{1-n}] \supset C}}}$$

Where:

rR	=	Regulative rule
A	=	Antecedent condition
DO	=	Deontic logic operators (obligatory, Legitimate, prohibited, and undetermined)
$\supset$	=	Read "if...then"
SpAct	=	Speech act level of meaning
C	=	Intended consequences
Ep	=	Episode level of meaning
MC	=	Master contract level of meaning
LS	=	Life script level of meaning
$\overline{}$	=	Read as "in the context of"

Figure 1: Rule Structure Variables of CMM

Regulative Rules linked to form a logic of conversation

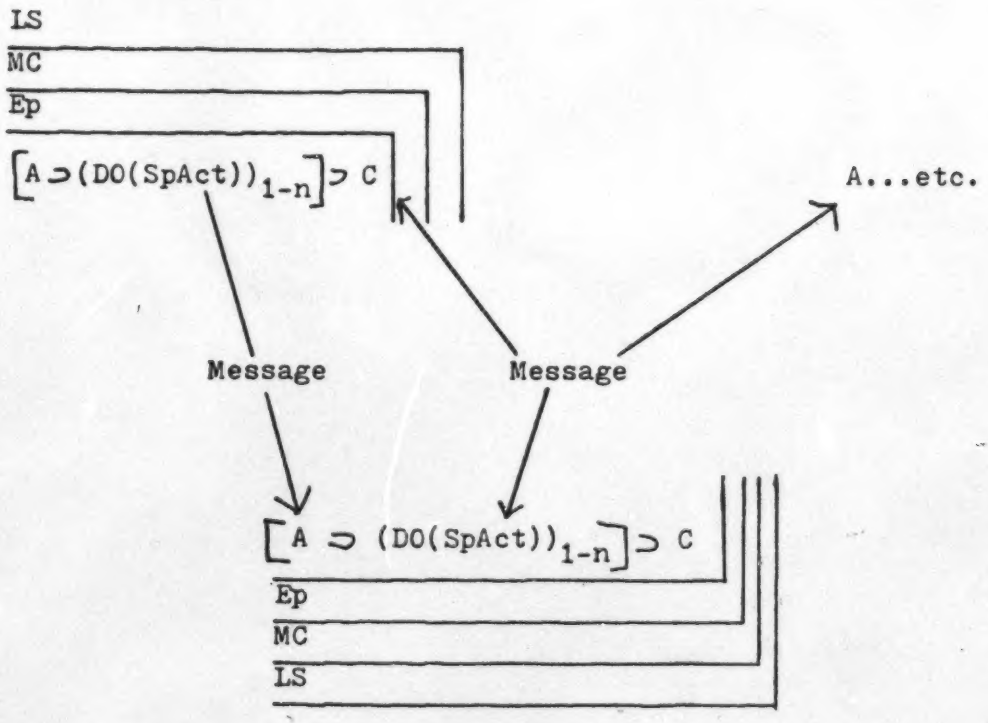

Figure 1
(Cont.)

ITEM	SCALE	VARIABLE	RELIABILITY[b]
1	The preceding situation ____/ speech act _____ seemed to require me to respond with act _____.[a]	Antecedent-Act linkage	.72
2	Given the situation, I would have to perform speech act ____ regardless of what the other person might say next.	Functional Autonomy of act and consequent	.70
3	The episode ____ requires me to perform this speech act now.	Episode-act linkage	.73
4	Performing this speech act closely reflects who I am and what a person like me must say.	Lifescript-Act linkage	.71
5	It is very important to <u>us</u>--to my sense of who we are as a couple--that I perform this speech act now.	Master Contract -Act linkage	.74
6	I must bring about the desired response in order to be the kind of person I want to be.	Consequent-Lifescript linkage	.72
7	I very much desired to bring about the other person's next speech act ____.	Consequence valence	.78
8	I could predict with great certainty that my act would get the response that it did.	Predictability of responsive act	.77
9	I am able to help the other person know what role would be appropriate for him/her to take.	Altercasting	.72
10	The other person probably thinks I'm very competent in this episode.	Presentation of self	.70
11	This episode is one that I very much desired to have occur because it has good results.	Valence of results	.79

Figure 2: Measurement Instrument and Reliabilities

[a]All items were followed by a seven-place strongly agree to strongly disagree scale.

[b]Reliabilities established by means of a test-retest procedure.

Episode: Discussion of "getting a job."
Time, Place: End of work week; as Dave comes in the door

Act		Message
1	Dave:	Did you go to Ceta today?
2	Jan:	No.
3	D	(Silence)
4	J	I called and there wasn't anything in today.
5	D	Did you leave the house?
6	J	I fed the cats.
7	D	You should have gone to Northampton. You're never going to get a job by laying around. The only way to do it is to start.
8	J	I know, I know...
9	D	Well, why aren't you doing anything about it?
10	J	(Silence)
11	D	You have to do something about it. You're just being lazy. It can't go on like this.
12	J	(Silence)
13	D	Look. We have to get $200 for May rent; we're already overdue on the phone bill. I don't know where we'll get May food money...
14	J	I know.
15	D	So why didn't you go to Northampton?
16	J	I was up and ready at nine, but I just couldn't do it.
17	D	Well, you're getting up at eight o'clock and we're leaving the house at nine.
18	J	All right.

Figure 3
Dialogue

Episode: Collective letter writing
Time, Place: At night, after dinner, 8-10 PM

Act		Message
1	Dave:	We have to write to Justin; he'll be out of school soon and we'll never find him then.
2	Jan:	I know and we want to get our stuff from him.
3	D	So let's just sit down, now, and get it done.
4	J	I want to write to him, but I just don't feel like it right now.
5	D	But you never feel like writing letters when I ask you. Since you can't plan it, just force yourself to do it.
6	J	I can never write letters like that, it wouldn't be any good.
7	D	But we really should get it done. It'll only take a while.
8	J	I just can't write if I don't feel like it.
9	D	But it seems like you never feel like it. If we just do it now, it'll be finished.
10	J	It won't work. I'm just not in the mood to write.
(telephone)		rrrrring.
11	D	Yeah, but you'll get into it once you start doing it..."Hello."
12	J	(Head nod) OK.

Figure 4

Dialogue

Table 1

NONPARAMETRIC CLUSTER ANALYSIS

Cluster I			
1.	Dave	"Job Episode"	.86(8)[b]
7.	Dave	"Eating Out Episode"	.96(8)
8.	Jan	"Eating Out Episode"	.96(7)
9.	Rob	"Buying Gifts"	.84(8)
Cluster II			
2.	Jan	"Job Episode"	.76(6)
3.	Dave	"Creative Writing"	.93(10)
4.	Jan	"Creative Writing"	.63(3)
5.	Dave	"Letter Writing"	.47(10)
6.	Jan	"Letter Writing"	.92(10)
10.	Ann	"Buying Gifts"	.93(3)

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[a]The correlation between Dave's and Jan's "Job Episode" is .23.

[b]All correlations are Spearman rank order.

Table 2

MEAN STRUCTURAL LINKAGE STRENGTHS

		Antecedent-Act	Episode-Act	Master Contract-Act	Life Script-Act	Consequent-Act	Consequent-Life Script	Valence of Consequent
Job Episode	Dave	5.60	5.50	1.80*	4.10[a]	4.40[b]	3.70[c]	2.60
	Jan	4.20	6.20	3.50*	5.60[a]	6.20[b]	1.60[c]	2.60
Letter Writing Episode	Dave	4.60	4.14[d]	3.70[e]	3.85[f]	4.57	4.00	4.57
	Jan	4.0	2.14[d]	2.71[e]	1.71[f]	4.00	4.42	4.57

* = $p < .1$

MEANS WITH DIFF SUBSCRIPS - $p < .05$

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